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(with respect of
Love to Huntington).

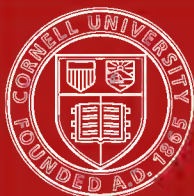
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REV. MR. ARMS' SERMON,

ON THE DEATH OF

HON. JABEZ W. HUNTINGTON.



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THE MYSTERY OF PROVIDENCE.

A

DISCOURSE,

OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF

HON. JABEZ W. HUNTINGTON,

UNITED STATES SENATOR,

Delivered in the First Church in Norwich,

November 7, 1847.

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BY HIRAM P. ARMS.  
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NORWICH:

J. DUNHAM'S PRESS, SHETUCKET STREET.

1847.

TO
Mrs. J. W. HUNTINGTON,
THIS DISCOURSE,
DICTATED BY SINCERE REGARD
"TO THE MEMORY OF A MAN OF WORTH,"
IS RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY
Inscribed
BY
THE AUTHOR.

SERMON.

JOB, 37: 23, 24.

The Almighty—we cannot find him out : excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice ; he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him : he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

The text is the conclusion of Elihu's speech, in reply to Job and his three friends. This young man had discoursed with much good sense, on the ways of Providence, and had better explained the sufferings of good men, than either of the speakers who preceded him. As he draws toward the close of his address, he seems overawed by the tokens which he discovers of the divine presence. In the 29th verse of the preceding chapter are intimations of a rising storm. The dark clouds are beginning to overspread the heavens, and the distant thunder is heard to utter its voice. As Elihu proceeds, the tempest increases. The clouds gather in deeper darkness ; the lightnings flash ; the thunders roll ; until overpowered by these terrific indications of an approaching Deity, he exclaims ; " At this also my heart trembleth, and is moved out of his place."

Still he recognizes the good hand of God, controlling the angry elements, and directing the lightning's bolt.

As he continues to discourse of the providence of God, in the change of the seasons, and in the various operations of nature, the tempest still raging in the darkened heavens,

suddenly the thick black cloud in the north is rent asunder, and discloses to view a bright and dazzling light, in appearance like burnished gold ; perhaps the Shekinah which afterward filled the temple with the divine glory.*

All this Elihu understood to foretoken the approach of Jehovah ; and abashed at the divine presence, he exclaims : “ With God is terrible majesty. The Almighty—we cannot find him out ; excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice, he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him ; he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.”

To embody the sentiment of this passage in a single proposition,

While many of the dealings of God's Providence are to us inexplicable, we know enough of his character to inspire us with confidence in his government, and submission to his will.

Two points in this proposition claim our attention.

I. Many of the dealings of God's Providence are to us inexplicable. “ The Almighty, we cannot find him out.”

We cannot grasp the infinitude of his being ; we cannot measure the duration of his existence, or the extent of his power ; we cannot fathom the depth of his knowledge, or comprehend the complex scheme of his government. Elihu derives his illustrations of this point mostly from the physical world. “ Can any,” said he, “ understand the spreadings of the clouds, or the noise of his tabernacle ? ” Less was then known of the second causes which give birth to storms, and engender the lightning, than is revealed to us in the light of modern science.

* “ Ezekiel, 1 ; 4, 27, 28.” Barnes on Job 37 ; 22.

But with all our knowledge of second causes, who can point us to the link in the chain, which connects those causes with the great First Cause? Who can demonstrate the agency, by which the whole is put in motion? We can often trace events back through a long series of second causes; but at last we find ourselves enshrouded in darkness. We cannot see the hand which moves the first wheel.

To adopt an illustration of Elihu's, God says to the snow: "Be thou on the earth, likewise to the small rain, and to the great rain of his strength." Philosophy points us to some facts in the formation of the snow and the rain; she exhibits to us the beautiful and variegated forms in which the vapor crystallizes to produce the snow. But can she tell us why that vapor crystallizes in these, rather than in a thousand other forms? or why it crystallizes at all? To all such inquiries philosophy is dumb. She has never penetrated the secret laboratory, where God performs his works; and learned the hidden process, by which he clothes the earth with beauty, and crowns the year with his goodness. There is more mystery in a single drop of rain falling to the earth, than all the philosophy, which was ever dreamed of, can explain.

And if we are so incompetent to understand the simplest matters, how can we expect to comprehend those, which are more complex, and farther removed from our observation.

Animal life—who can tell us whence it comes, whither it goes, or what it is? Who can explain the higher life, which pertains to man? "There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty hath given him understanding." But what is the essence of that living soul, which

God breathed into man, when he gave him being ? What tie connects it with the body ? and at what point ? Why is it, that when the soul leaves the body, that erect and noble form, with all its delicate and complex machinery, bearing upon its very front the impress of its Maker—why is it that this splendid structure so soon falls into a heap of ruins ? All its parts remain. Its organs are all there. But not one of them will perform its wonted functions. Not a muscle moves ; not a nerve retains its sensibility. Intelligence no longer beams from the eye ; the tongue is silent ; the ear is deaf to the sweetest tones of affection ; and incipient decomposition admonishes us to remove that child of mortality, and commit it to the bosom of its mother earth.

Whence goes the Spirit ? But for the light of revelation, we should find it difficult to demonstrate that it does not perish with the body. This blessed volume assures us, that when the spirit leaves the body, it returns to God who gave it. But a thousand questions may be asked respecting the mode of its existence in a future state, which we have no means of answering.

And if we are so ignorant of ourselves, how can we expect to find out the Almighty to perfection, or comprehend the laws which govern his conduct ?

We recognize him as the author of our life, and the Supreme Arbiter of our destiny. He has fixed the limits of our earthly existence, which we cannot pass. But who can tell us by what rule he assigns these limits ? One just opens his eyes upon the light of this world, and after a few days of sorrow and of pain, closes them again in perpetual night. Another is arrested in the buoyancy of youth, and consigned to what we term a premature grave.

Another, in the midst of his days, bound to earth by the strongest ties known to affection, and occupying a post of usefulness, which in our apprehension it would be unsafe to vacate, is nevertheless struck down at a blow. When we inquire for him in the domestic circle, of which he was the soul, the deep drawn sighs of bereaved hearts tell us he is not there. When we seek him in the public walks of life, of which he was but yesterday the ornament, the look of sadness which meets us on every side, tells us he is gone. But who can tell us why? Who can explain the reasons which govern the divine mind, in thus extinguishing the early dawn? in thus blotting the sun from life's zenith? We may propound many hypotheses to explain the mystery. But after all we are compelled to acknowledge our incompetence to lift the vail. God giveth to us no account of his matters.

The sages, who came to comfort Job in his affliction, would ascribe such a dispensation to the superior wickedness of those, who are thus removed. But this hypothesis has been long since exploded. It is contradicted by the events which are constantly passing before us. Some of the noblest specimens of humanity, which the world has ever known, men of talents, of learning, of high official rank, and all these consecrated to their country, and to their God, we have seen cut off in the midst of their usefulness; while "the wicked live, become old, yea are mighty in power." Who can explain to us the deep mystery of this providence?

That the veteran of four score years, worn out in life's conflicts, should be permitted to unbuckle his harness, and repose from his toils, we might reasonably expect. But why discharge the vigorous, the active, the efficient?—

Christian resignation may answer, "Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." But when we inquire for the reasons, which made it seem good, we can obtain no response.

We know that God makes his providential dispensations subservient to his moral government, to the promotion of his purposes of love and mercy toward our world. But this general principle sheds little light on the point now before us. If God wishes to build up in this world a kingdom of righteousness, why does he cast away the very instruments, which to us seem best suited to this work?—Are the laborers too many for the harvest? Is there danger that the work will be too soon accomplished? But the demand is for more laborers.

In this connection we might inquire, Why does God suffer infidelity and wickedness to overrun some of the fairest portions of his heritage? Why suffer so many gifted minds to be poisoned with unbelief? Why not so arrange his providential government, that all great men shall be good men? that all the talent, and mental resources of the world shall be arrayed on the side of righteousness and truth?

We can easily frame suppositions which will obviate whatever objections to the goodness of God may arise from this source; but after all, we must confess that in this department of God's administration, is much that is to us inexplicable.

"He respecteth not any that are wise of heart"—he takes no counsel of earthly sages. But whatsoever he pleases, that he does in heaven and on earth. And who shall presume to question the rectitude of his doings? Is he not competent to govern the world which he has made?

All misgiving upon this point will be removed by a due

consideration of the second part of the proposition before us.

II. We know enough of God's character, to inspire us with confidence in his government, and submission to his will.

The text affirms that in view of his power, his justice, his goodness and his compassion, men have cause to fear him, to demean themselves before him with reverence and cordial submission.

1. He is excellent in *power*.

His dominion is absolute and unlimited. Whatever other agencies exist, they all have their origin in him. And we may be sure he would never give existence to an agency, which he could not control.

He would never throw a creature of his beyond his reach. Even the swift-winged lightning is subject to his direction.

"With his hands he covereth the lightning,
And commandeth it where to strike.
He pointeth out to it his friends,
The collecting of his wrath is upon the wicked."*

He holds the bolt in his own hand, and launches it whithersoever he will. It can alight on no head, however defenceless, without his permission.

Nor is it at all inconsistent with his entire control of these fearful agents, that they are all governed by fixed and established laws: for it was he who instituted these laws, and that, in view of all the circumstances in which they would ever act.

Besides, these laws would cease to operate the moment God should withdraw his hand; for they are nothing more than the uniform mode of his operation. There is no in-

*Job 36: 32, 33. Barnes' Translation.

herent efficacy in a law of nature. But for God's all-pervading agency it is perfectly inert and inoperative. It is God who worketh all in all. There is not a point within the whole circuit of the universe where his powerful agency is not exerted.

“ Behold he spreadeth his light upon his pavilion.
He also covereth the depth of the sea.”

From the loftiest height to the lowest depth, he is every where present by his mighty power, directing and controlling all things according to the counsels of his infinite wisdom.

Such a God is able to protect us. No harm can reach us without his permission ; no bereavement overtake us but by his direction. And when he commands the rod to smite us, all resistance is vain and presumptuous. Let our trust then be in his mighty arm, and our submission to his irresistible will, cheerful and confiding.

2. God excels in *justice*.

He can have no motive to do his creatures wrong. Not only so, the maintenance of his own authority depends upon the administration of even handed justice. Should the Judge of all the earth fail to do right, he would forfeit the allegiance of every loyal subject. Besides, it is inherent in the very nature of God to love and to exercise justice. We have no occasion therefore ever to distrust the equity of his conduct, or to breathe the most secret suspicion, that he can do us wrong.

In the darkest day of adversity, when our cup overflows with sorrow, the language of the prophet still becomes us ; “ Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine, the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold,

and there shall be no herd in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation."

3. The *goodness* of God is fitted to inspire us with confidence in his government and submission to his will.— "The Lord is abundant in goodness and in truth." It is by his benignity, his kindness, his beneficence that we are admonished to trust him. "How excellent," says David, "is thy loving kindness, O God. Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."

Not only can God do us no wrong, but he loads us with benefits. In adversity we are prone to forget his favors.— Yet in the darkest day we are still surrounded with tokens of his loving kindness. How many and how rich are the consolations, which he pours into the heart pierced with the shaft of affliction. And how many are the blessings, which he gives, compared with those which he takes away. So that if we count up the number of our mercies, we shall find them manifold more than our griefs, even when those griefs flow in their broadest and deepest channels.

4. The *tender compassion* of God is also brought to view in the text. "He will not afflict." He will not oppress, nor crush the loyal subjects of his government.

In one sense he afflicts ; he chastens his people for their good. But "he doth not willingly afflict nor grieve the children of men. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him. His compassions fail not."

No man had ever more cause than Job to distrust the paternal care of God ; and yet it is with special reference to his trials, that James says : "The Lord is pitiful and of tender mercy."

This attribute of Jehovah was most strikingly displayed in the person of his Son, Jesus Christ. It marked the whole course of his life. It beamed in the tears which fell upon the grave of his friend Lazarus. The widow of Nain felt its power, in the restoration of her only son from the dominion of death. It spoke in the tones of his voice, as he stood on Mount Olivet, weeping over the ill-fated Jerusalem. It breathed in his prayer for his crucifiers. It was heard in the words of comfort which he spoke to the dying malefactor.

In scenes like these we can read the heart of our heavenly Father. For Christ is the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person.

Do we not owe submission, cordial, unreserved submission to the will of such a Father? May not the government of such a God command our confidence? If our lips are not opened in praise, let them be dumb.

These are some of the considerations suggested in the text, fitted to inspire us with confidence in the government of God, and submission to his will. Are they not sufficient? What if there are some dark dispensations of his providence, which we cannot satisfactorily explain? We know enough of his character to silence every rebellious thought, and attract us to the covert of his arms. True, he does not reveal to us all the deep counsels, which govern his conduct. We are incompetent to understand them. But he invites us to his bosom, where throbs a heart full of kindness, tenderness, and compassion. He points us also to his mighty arm, which is able to execute the purposes of his love. What can we ask more? What more could he give?

This train of remark, I have no need to inform you, has

been suggested by the events of the past week. Nor can I do justice to my own feelings, or meet the reasonable expectations of a sorrowing community, without speaking somewhat more in detail of the bereavement which is upon us.

When a private citizen dies, grief is awakened within the little circle in which he had moved, and we sympathize with his bereaved family. But when, as in the present instance, a public man falls, a member of the highest legislative body in the realm, and falls too at a period in our national affairs, when we have special need of wise and upright men to administer the government, the calamity is one in which a nation participates.

We should be inexcusable indeed, if we did not notice the hand of God in such a dispensation. It is one of those measures of his providential government, which are to us inexplicable. We cannot tell why *such* a man should be *thus* removed, and at *such* a time. The solution of the mystery is one of those secret things which belong to God. However wise of heart we may profess to be, he will not admit us to his secret counsels, nor explain to us all the measures of his administration. It is enough for us at present to know that "he causeth it to come." What we know not now, we may know hereafter. At present we walk by faith, and on the ground of what we do know of God's character, we are bound to confide in his goodness, and rejoice in his government.

No event, within my knowledge, has ever so deeply moved the sympathies of this community, as the unexpected and very sudden decease of the late Judge Huntington. It is not his family alone, it is not those alone who sympathized with him in his political preferences, but men

of all parties, even strangers to him in person, pause to drop a tear upon his grave, and express their heartfelt grief at his removal. There is but one feeling in the whole community. All seem conscious that the hand of God is heavy upon us; that the sad event which has brought *desolation* to his own family, is a public bereavement, which calls for an expression of public sorrow. If there is any feeling different from this, its discordant notes have not reached my ears.

The leading events in the life of our departed friend have already been laid before you in the public prints.*

He was a native of our village, and descended from one of its most ancient families. He bore a name heretofore not unknown in the annals of his country. But so far from being indebted to his name, he did much to add to it new lustre.

It is not my purpose to pronounce his eulogy. I know that his spirit would frown upon me, if I should desecrate this day and this place to celebrate the praises of a mortal. He would say: "Give God the praise, for it is by his grace that I am what I am."

It were indeed no difficult task to delineate his character; for it was so transparent as to be known and read of all men. All however, which I shall attempt on the present occasion, will be to recal your attention to a few of the more prominent traits in his character, for the instruction and imitation of survivors.

By the hand of his Maker he was endowed with an *intellect of superior order*. And his native talents were improved by the hand of careful and diligent culture. He had subjected his mind to rigid discipline. This was ap-

*See Note A.

parent in all the productions of that mind. Whatever emanated from his pen or his lips bore the impress of vigorous and well regulated thought. He was a laborious student. He seemed resolved that whatever he did, should be well done.

Industry was a prominent trait in his character. Whether at the bar, on the bench, or in the halls of legislation, those who have known him best, are ready to testify to his untiring habits of application. Had he felt less regard for the public good, and been more disposed to spare himself, he might perhaps still have been with us. But he was not the man to shrink from personal sacrifice, where his duty called him.

As a *public speaker*, he laid claim to few of the graces of oratory or the mere embellishments of rhetoric. His reliance was upon the strength of his argument, and the power of his logic. He called to his aid an array of facts, and by a careful induction of these bore conviction to the minds of his hearers.

His *language* was chaste and simple ; abounding in the good old Saxon, and expressing with great precision the exact image of the thought in his own mind. No one would be at loss to apprehend his meaning. The transparency of his language was a true index to the character of his mind. It evinced the discipline, to which his thoughts had been subjected. He was not educated in the school, which teaches that "the design of language is to conceal thought." He had no use for any such instrument. He was a stranger to deceit and tergiversation. He was never ashamed or afraid to express his real sentiments.

You have all known him as an *upright man*. In the twenty years of his public life, when has he ever been con-

victed of a mean or dishonorable act? When has he ever been known to sacrifice principle to personal advantage? or the good of his country to the interests of a party.

Strict integrity in our public men is a jewel, the price of which is much enhanced by its scarcity. All, who have known the subject of these remarks, how widely soever they may have differed from him on questions of political economy, will unite in testifying that he was *an honest man*, that the sentiments which he avowed were his real sentiments, adopted from a conviction of their truth and importance.

(He was a man of *moral courage*. Not indifferent to the opinions which men entertained of him, still he would never yield what he believed to be just and right, to win the favor of any man, or set of men. Not hasty in forming an opinion, when, from honest conviction, he had assumed a position, he stood firm, even if he stood alone.) No matter if the popular voice was against him, no matter if his friends deserted him; before he could be moved, he must be convinced that he was wrong. The moral sublimity of such a course can be best appreciated by those who know the powerful influences which tempt our public men to swerve from their own convictions of right.

He was distinguished for his *conscientiousness*. With all his courtesy, and all his kindness, he would not trample upon the dictates of conscience to oblige his best friends.

(He had *great reverence for the Sabbath*. He observed it with all the strictness with which it was wont to be regarded, in New England's palmiest days. Whether at home or abroad, these sacred hours he devoted to the high purpose for which God gave them.)

Senator Huntington was a *patriot*. If there ever was a

man who aimed at the good of his country it was he. Love of country predominated above the love of party. If at times he expressed himself strongly in disapprobation of public measures, or of public men, it was because he believed their policy was injurious to his country. I have heard him converse frequently and freely upon the administration of public affairs; never have I heard him allude to the bearing which any measure was to have upon his private interest, or upon the interest of his party, any farther than he considered that party identified with the welfare of his country. He was ever looking to the good of his country, not this or that interest or section, but his whole country. This was the pole-star which guided his course through all the intricate topics pertaining to political economy. His affection for his country was not that of a sycophant, or a demagogue, but of a dutiful son. In losing him, she has lost one of her brightest ornaments.— And well may she mourn his departure; for, in a day like this, she has need of all her true hearted sons, to extricate her from the perils of her present position.

But while he is lost to earth, he is not blotted from being. He still lives, a citizen we trust of a better world than this, where all his excellencies will be appreciated and perfected; and where he will be known by a name, which, in its brighter splendors, will eclipse all the honors of this world. All his earthly distinctions are there merged in *the Christian*. And this reveals to us a trait in his character, which we love to contemplate above all others. Without this, his talents, his learning, his mental endowments, and the honors which a grateful country bestowed upon him, would all have been of little worth.

They would not all have given him the victory over

death, nor entitled him to the heavenly rest. It is his piety, more than his honors, which now affords consolation to his bereaved friends.

He made a profession of religion just as he was entering upon his public life. And his subsequent course has evinced the sincerity of the vows, which he then assumed.— His mind seized upon the religion of the gospel with a firm grasp. He felt his need of its hallowed influence in the turmoil of political life. Living and dying, he has found it a precious boon. It was a light to cheer his heart in the day of sadness, and to guide his steps in the high places of the earth, where God in his providence called him to walk.

His religion was in keeping with his general character. It assumed very much of that intellectual cast, which we should expect in a mind disciplined as his was. It was with him more a matter of principle than an impulse of feeling. He was not destitute of deep emotion, as those can testify who have listened to his devotions in the family, and in the social circle.) But his religion lay deeper than the passions. It underlaid the whole superstructure of his character; controlling not only his emotions and directing them heavenward, but forming the very principles of his conduct, and shaping the whole course of his life.

There was a childlike *simplicity* in his religion, which invested it with peculiar loveliness. He was averse to all ostentation, and display of his religious experience; yet was he ever ready to converse freely upon topics of practical and experimental piety.

Humility was a prominent trait in his religious character. He loved the place of social prayer. After occupying, and honorably filling his seat in the Senate of the United States, after there coming in conflict with the mightiest intellect

in the nation, after giving his voice and his vote to decide questions of grave national import, on his return to his native village, he delighted to occupy a humble seat in the place consecrated to social prayer. Those who have been accustomed to meet us on such occasions, will not soon forget the deep interest which he always manifested, or the appropriateness and comprehensiveness of the prayers which he offered.)

On the last occasion of this kind which preceded his death, it was remarked that he prayed with more than his wonted fervor and spirituality ; as though he had a presentiment that he was doing his last work. When we met in the same place on the evening subsequent to his departure, we seemed to be very near to heaven, for one of our number was already quite within its sacred precincts.

Other indications pointed to the same increase of spirituality and heavenly mindedness.

While he was not an indifferent spectator of the events which are transpiring in our nation's history, (how could he be, occupying the high and responsible post which he did ?) yet he was evidently more and more desirous to retire from the conflicts of party strife, so far as the claims of duty would permit. An unusually large portion of his time, during the present recess of Congress, has been spent in the bosom of his family. Where else should a christian spend the last hours of his probation ? Besides, he was peculiarly fitted to enjoy and to diffuse happiness within the domestic circle. As a husband he was tender and affectionate ; as a son, the respect and deference, which he paid to an aged and worthy father, approached almost to religious veneration. As a brother he was all that a brother could be. And when he was about to leave these dear objects of

his affection, he seemed desirous to draw them still nearer to himself, and bind them more closely to his heart.

He was evidently detaching himself from the cares of earth, and preparing for his final departure. His affairs had long since been so arranged, that no matters of business were permitted to disturb the tranquility of the closing scene. When he saw the approach of the fatal messenger, nothing remained but to bid adieu to loved ones whom he was leaving, and commend his departing spirit to the hands of One, whom not having seen he loved. Why should he shrink from the summons, which called him home? True, he was bound to earth by many strong and tender ties.—But the will of God was that he should go; and he had long since learned submission to that will. He bowed therefore with the resignation of his Savior, when he said: “O my Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, thy will be done.”

His mind remained unclouded to the last; perfectly conscious that he was passing the dark valley, yet with a hope so full of immortality, that he feared not the dark waters, which intervened. He saw that it was a narrow stream, while faith pointed him to the bright fields of living green, which lay beyond. This is not death, it is the entrance upon life.

“Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.”

Such, my hearers, was the man whom we mourn, such his life, such his peaceful, tranquil departure. I will not dilute the force of such an example by any protracted remarks of my own.*

I cannot forbear however to say in conclusion, that the

*See Note B.

subject before us points to the worth, the indispensable necessity of personal religion. To this it points as the true end of life, an object to be sought as hid treasure. Nothing is worthy to come in competition with it.

When we stand around the grave of departed worth, we can form a sober and rational estimate of life's pursuits.—What are its choicest treasures, what its brightest ornaments? What are the honors which the world bestows? Not to be despised, unless they impede our progress heavenward. But what can they all avail us in life's great crisis? What support do they give the sinking spirit, as the night of death closes around us? The man of titles and honors needs, in that trying hour, the same consolations, and the same hopes, as the humblest citizen. All the honors within the gift of the world, cannot ease a single pain, or stay the process of dissolution. The lowest degree of Christian faith outweighs them all. Destitute of this, the dying man is indeed poor and miserable. With this he may triumph even as he sinks to the grave. For however strong the inducements which make him desire to live, it is still gain to die. The honors of heaven are worth more than those of earth. Its joys are brighter, its treasures more enduring. But these are the rewards of faith. They are to him, who overcometh.

For illustration of this truth I point you to the illustrious man, whose sudden decease has occasioned these remarks. In the trying hour, the world, with all its fading honors, was to him nothing—*his hope in Christ, every thing.*

I commend his Christian example especially to his contemporaries, to those who have known him from his youth up. I commend to you his testimony in favor of experimental, practical religion.

You have known him too well to harbor a suspicion that he was acting a part, which did not belong to him. You believe that he was honest in his professions. The sentiments which he avowed on this, as on other subjects were his real sentiments. You also know that there was not in his character one element of superstition or fanaticism. He was not the weak minded man to be borne away by blind impulse. The structure of his mind, his habits of thinking, the very profession to which he was trained, all led him carefully to weigh the evidence on which he was to found an opinion. Besides, when he took upon him a profession of religion, the powers of his mind were matured. He was competent then, if ever, to form a correct decision. Under these circumstances, and with every facility for understanding the subject, he embraced the religion of Christ, and ever after governed his life by its precepts. He entrusted his eternal interests to its safe keeping. Nor does his example stand unsupported and alone. Other men of gifted minds, and members of the same bar, were with him. Of whom it is sufficient to name to this audience the late Judge Wolcott, who has also finished his course and entered into his rest. These men have testified, and sealed their testimony with their dying breath, that the religion of the gospel is a glorious reality ; that it lays the only foundation for hope beyond the grave.

My dear hearers will you not heed testimony coming from such a source, from men whom you have known and respected, and to whose opinions you would listen on any other subject. And their testimony, in the present instance, is not mere matter of opinion. It respects their own personal experience. They speak what they do know, and testify what they have proved by actual experiment. Why should

you not receive their witness. The religion which governed their lives, and which gave them the victory over death, is not less needful to you than it was to them. The hour is at hand when you will feel this need. But would you have the support of religion in that trying hour, when all other supports will fail, you must embrace it before the tide of life is ebbing, and your frail bark is about to be stranded upon the shores of a dark eternity. To furnish you rational support it must be inwrought into the very structure of your soul. It must govern your life, and then when you meet the final conflict, you will be prepared to triumph. That conflict may be nearer than you suppose. The messenger of death often gives little warning of his approach, as we are loudly admonished in the present instance.

And to meet death unprepared, at the close of a prayerless life, with no faith in him who is the resurrection and the life, with sin unrepented of, and unforgiven; to die without hope, and leave to sorrowing friends no consolation from this source; the very thought of it "maketh one's heart tremble, and move out of its place." What then must be the reality? My hearers, your honest convictions on this subject, I doubt not, are correct. Act upon these convictions. Choose ye this day the Lord to be your God. Lay your treasures, your talents, your honors, your influence, yourselves upon the altar of Jesus Christ, and he will remember you in the day of your trial, with the favor which he bears to his chosen. You too shall rest in hope. And while you are tuning your harps above to the high praises of God and the Lamb, your example shall remain on earth, a rich legacy to sorrowing friends, and an encouragement to survivors to secure for themselves the same glorious inheritance.

NOTES.

A.

The following sketch of the leading events in the life of Senator Huntington appeared in the *Norwich Courier* of Nov. 2, the date of his decease.

JASEZ WILLIAMS HUNTINGTON, son of General Zachariah Huntington, was born at Norwich, Nov. 8th, 1788, consequently was 59 years of age, wanting six days, at the time of his decease. Educated at Yale College, where he was graduated in 1806, he pursued his professional studies at the Law School in Litchfield, from Feb. 1806 until the latter part of March 1810, at which time he was admitted to the bar in Litchfield County, and immediately thereafter entered upon the practice of law, at Litchfield. He represented the town of Litchfield in the General Assembly of Connecticut in the Session of 1824. In April, 1829, he was elected a Representative in Congress for the 21st Congress. In April 1831, he was elected for the 22d Congress; and in April 1833, was elected for the third time, to a seat in the 23d Congress. Having received in May, 1834, the appointment of Associate Judge in the Superior Court and of the Supreme Court of Errors, he resigned his seat in Congress at the close of the 1st Session of the 23d Congress. In October 1834, he removed from Litchfield to Norwich, where he continued to reside till his death.

In May 1840, he was appointed a Senator in the Congress of the United States, for the unexpired term of six years from the 4th of March 1839, to fill the vacancy occasioned by the death of the Hon. Thaddeus Betts. Accepting this appointment, he immediately resigned his judicial office; and in 1845 he was re-elected to the United States Senate for another term.

Thus it will be seen that the last twenty years of his life have been spent almost wholly in the public service. And at no period of his life has he been every way so well qualified, whether by long experience in legislation, or by his thorough and intimate acquaintance with the wants, the interests, and the general condition of the country and the operations of the Government, to make his influence tell in the National Councils, as at the moment of his death.

B.

The funeral, which was attended on the day of his death, is thus noticed in the *Courier* of Nov. 4.

The funeral obsequies of the deeply lamented **JUDGE HUNTINGTON** were attended by a large concourse of his fellow-citizens of Norwich and of towns adjacent, at 3 o'clock on Tuesday last. The Rev. Dr. Bond officiated in the opening services at the residence of the deceased, and the deep seriousness which pervaded the assemblage during the solemn address to the Throne of Grace, attested how fully the sympathies of those present mingled with the tears of stricken and bereaved friends.

The following was the order of procession to the grave: Clergy—Hearse, with the Body—Relatives of the Deceased—Attending Physicians—Gentlemen of the Bar—City Authorities—Town Authorities—Officers of the Norwich Bank—Officers of Norwich Savings Society—Citizens. Pall Bearers,—Hon. J. A. Rockwell—Hon. Chas. J. McCurdy—Edward Whiting—Daniel W. Cuit—Gen. Wm. Williams—Chas. Coit.

Arrived at the grave, and the body committed to its last repose, the Rev. Mr. Arms, of the First Congregational Church, made an address, substantially as follows :

ADDRESS AT THE GRAVE.

"The *mourners* on this occasion are not restricted by lines of kindred. The grief which this sudden stroke of a mysterious Providence has awakened, will indeed be most keenly felt in the domestic circle of the excellent man, whose remains we are now committing to the dust. For within that circle he was best known. And where he was best known he was most beloved. But this stroke falls upon the whole community; and they claim the privilege of mingling their tears with those of the afflicted family.

Seldom are we called to perform these sad offices for one who has a deeper, stronger hold upon the respect of the public mind, and the affection of the public heart. We are all bereaved, and the unexpected quarter from which the bereavement comes renders it the more painful. We were not prepared for it. We were taken by surprise. The announcement fell upon our ears like a sudden peal of thunder from the clear blue sky which is over us.

But yesterday he was one of us. And though in the bosom of his family some anxiety was felt on his account—for affection is quick to take alarm—yet no serious apprehensions were entertained of such a result as we have witnessed. On Thursday last he walked home from the city. On Friday he was slightly indisposed. On Saturday he took medical advice. On the Sabbath was no material change. On Monday, as the day advanced, his symptoms assumed a more alarming type; and between twelve and one o'clock this morning, his spirit took its upward flight.—Truly, in the midst of life we are in death.

If this numerous auditory wish to know how he met the final conflict, I have only to say, he met it as a *Christian*. To those who were acquainted with his mental habits, and his religious experience, it would have been strange if he had not thus met it. *He* was not taken by surprise. Death was an event to which he had familiarized his mind, especially for the last two years of his life. It found him ready. He had no preparation to make. Nothing remained but to commit his beloved friends, whom he was leaving, to the care of his Heavenly Father, and his own departing spirit to the hands of Him whom not having seen he loved, and on whom all his hopes for eternity were hung.

Let others, more familiar with his career of usefulness in public life, speak of the well earned honors which were bestowed upon him. Let them speak of him as he deserves; as the able and honorable advocate, the upright and impartial judge, the enlightened and patriotic statesman. But it was my privilege to know him by a brighter name than these. He was a *Christian*. All the honors which he had won he brought and laid upon the altar of Jesus Christ, and there with the temper of a little child sat down at the feet of this divine Teacher, to learn from His lips how a sinner could be just with God.

Those who have known most of the operations of his mind, have marked of late an increase of spirituality and heavenly mindedness, by which the Master was ev-

idently preparing him for the approaching change. The last two years of his life have been to him like the fifteen years which God added to the life of Hezekiah.

Two years ago he was raised up from the borders of the grave, and allowed the intervening time to perfect his character for the heavenly state. And well did he improve it. His attachments to friends in this world were tender and ardent; but it was evident that the attractions of heaven were fast gaining upon those of earth. He has at length yielded to those attractions, and the last tie which bound him to earth is severed. He is gone: and while we are bedewing his grave with our tears, we trust he is mingling with the spirits of just men made perfect, attuning his harp to the high praises of God. He is gone—for it is not he who lies before us; it is only the frail tenement, which for a few fleeting years he inhabited, and which is destined to sleep in the dust till the voice of the archangel calls it forth, a spiritual body, refined and fitted to be the everlasting abode of his glorified spirit.

And now as we turn in sadness from the grave of our departed friend, (for he was the friend of us all,) what one trait of his character do we most approve—what one regard most worthy of our emulation? It is his piety—his humble, unaffected piety. This was its brightest gem, its most precious jewel. This it was which shed such a mild lustre around the closing scene of his life. This was the dawn of heaven to his soul. Here is treasure which moth and rust do not corrupt; here is honor which never fades.

That we may secure the like precious boon to ourselves—that at last we too may rest in hope, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with us all, amen.”

Thus closed a drama which has filled our community with deep and sudden grief; and while it utters another lesson of the uncertain tenure by which the honors of this world are held, it speaks, too, in language not to be mistaken—in language which we are sure will be ever cherished by his surviving, sorrowing friends—of the value of a christian's hope and the peaceful, calm beauty of a christian's death.

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